

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 1773

By Bailey

A RESOLUTION to honor and congratulate John Landon Stafford
on the celebration of his 100th birthday.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that we should pay tribute to those citizens who are celebrating special occasions in their estimable lives; and

WHEREAS, John Landon Stafford celebrated his 100th birthday on April 15, 2022, a milestone that was commemorated as yet another precious souvenir of life's rich pageant; and

WHEREAS, a decorated veteran and member of America's Greatest Generation, John Stafford served his nation with courage and honor during World War II; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Stafford was born on April 15, 1922, in Gainesboro to Comer and Earsie Stafford; and

WHEREAS, John Stafford enlisted in the United States Navy in Detroit, Michigan, on October 23, 1942, and, upon completion of basic training in Great Lakes, Illinois, was transferred to the USS *Dyson* (DD-572) in Orange, Texas, on December 30, 1942; and

WHEREAS, holding the rank of Ship Cook 3rd Class, Mr. Stafford was assigned to a 20mm anti-aircraft gun during times of battle; after a shakedown cruise in Guantanamo Bay and two months of anti-submarine duties in the Atlantic, his ship departed Sandy Hook, New Jersey, via the Panama Canal for the Pacific Ocean on May 15, 1943; and

WHEREAS, the USS *Dyson*, as one of eight ships comprising Destroyer Squadron 23, engaged and defeated the Japanese Navy in many historic battles, including the Battle of Empress Augusta Bay and the Battle of Cape St. George, in which Squadron 23 sank three Japanese destroyers, Onami, Makinami, and Yuguri, on November 23, 1943; and

WHEREAS, the historic victory at the Battle of Cape St. George marked the end of Japanese resistance in the Solomon Islands and was described as an "almost perfect surface action" by the Naval War College; and

WHEREAS, John Stafford served heroically as a member of Squadron 23, which is credited with destroying one Japanese cruiser, nine destroyers, one submarine, and approximately thirty aircraft between November 1943 and February 1944; in total, the USS *Dyson* received eleven Battle Stars for its service during World War II; and

WHEREAS, aboard the USS *Dyson*, Mr. Stafford and his shipmates sailed for the United States on September 10, 1945; after arriving in Washington, D.C., the USS *Dyson* was presented with the Presidential Unit Citation on October 19, 1945; and

WHEREAS, John Stafford disembarked the USS *Dyson* at the Charleston Navy Shipyard and received his honorable discharge from the Navy, earning the respect and admiration of his fellow citizens while bringing honor to the State of Tennessee for his wartime service to our nation; and

WHEREAS, as Mr. Stafford enters his eleventh decade, he is still an active and productive member of society who is admired for his wisdom, guidance, and generosity; and

WHEREAS, we wish to grasp this golden opportunity to specially recognize one of Tennessee's most outstanding citizens on this very special occasion; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we hereby honor and congratulate John Landon Stafford on the celebration of his 100th birthday, thank him for his meritorious service to his country, and extend to him our best wishes for many happy returns of the day.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy and upon proper request made to

the appropriate clerk, the language appearing immediately following the State seal appear without House or Senate designation.